

LITERARY NOTICES.
OLD PORTRAITS AND MODERN SKETCHES. By J. G. Whittier. Boston: Turner & Co. 1850.
We had intended to give a more full notice of this most agreeable and welcome little book; but the press of other things has made it impossible. Mr. Whittier's reputation, in poetry or prose, is quite beyond the reach of the need of any remarks of ours, and the readers of the *Era* need not be informed as to the quality and style of these sketches, some of which were first prepared for its columns. We feel a sense of personal obligation for this genial portrait of a class of men, who are far less known than they should be, for their sake or ours. We will only add, that the "Old Portraits" are those of John Bunyan, Thomas Eliot, James Nayler, Andrew Marvell, and John Roberts, (all sufferers more or less in the Puritan times); together with Richard Baxter and Samuel Hopkins; the "Modern Sketches," of William Legett, a N. P. Rogers, and Robert Dinwiddie—this last a genuine New Hampshire Burm. The only thing that occurs to us for criticism, is the sanction which Mr. Whittier gives (p. 934) to a very loose and exaggerated fancy portrait (as it seems to us) by Leggett, of the contrast between Kentucky and Ohio, such comparisons are unnecessarily odious, particularly when not strictly accurate, which, we think, is the case with this.

MASSACHUSETTS QUARTERLY REVIEW. March, 1850.
A number of more than usual ability and spirit. The prominent article in it is again from the hand of the editor, and strongly marked with the characteristics of his thought and style—the most full and thorough and "appreciating" criticism of Emerson's various writings that has appeared as yet. The first article is on judicial oaths; one, a brief and entertaining notice of two new Trinitaries, sentimental and speculative; another on our postage system; and one from a Leipzig correspondent, on "Pan-Americanism." The list of new publications, with several brief comments, is unusually full and valuable.

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER. March, 1850.
This exhibits the "respectable," as that just noticed, the more free and radical side of the so-called liberal thought in Boston. We spoke two months ago more distinctly of its character. The names of Professors Agassiz and Follen, and of E. P. Whipple, among the contributors to this number, show that it is bound not to go behind for science, scholarship, or literary criticism. Its guiding hand is that of indisputably the ablest and most popular of the Unitarian preachers. As a general review, we think it is unsurpassed by any. It may be had on application at Farnham's.

We have received the following pamphlets:
FAITHFULNESS OF YOUNG PHYLAS, OR CHRONO-THERMAL FACTS. By William Turner.
A spirited assault on veneration.
THE KING OF RIVERS. By Cora Montgomery.
An interesting geographical review of Slavery in America.
At Adams's, Pennsylvania Avenue.

Also, the following serials:
DICTIONARY OF MECHANICS, ENGINE WORK, &c. No. 4. Previously noticed. At Farnham's.
CHAPMAN'S AMERICAN DRAWING BOOK. No. 3. For sale at Farnham's.

Altogether the most beautiful and elaborate of the guides to that valuable accomplishment—a publication, lacking the copiers, as elegant as the London Art Journal.
At Taylor & Maury's.

Also, the following Reviews and Magazines:
FOURTH REVIEW. January, 1850.
Not a particularly interesting number, it seems to us, though the articles on "Shirley" and "Lamartine" redine it from any reproach in that regard. Colonization, Mines, Orange Processions, and Sanitary Reform, are "British Subjects"; Modern Turkey and Ancient Greece complete the bill of fare.

LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW. January, 1850.
The writer on the Physical History of Man presents pretty fully the arguments for the unity of the race, in opposition to the view taken (among others) by Professor Agassiz, in the article before alluded to. This, and Venice, are the most attractive titles in the present number. There is also a long article on Free Trade, another on Clergy Relief, one on Draining, and two on Irish Politics. For the opinions and the ability, the name of the Review is a sufficient guarantee.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.
The reputation of this Magazine is sufficiently sustained in the present number. A very elaborate article on the protection of Agriculture we have not had time to study. "The Year of Reaction," and "Howard" will attract the gravest class of readers; while there is more than an average number of lighter pieces—some of them excellent tales, as we are told.

The foregoing Reviews and Magazine published by Leonard Scott & Co., New York. For sale at Adams's Bookstore, Washington.

THE KNUCKERBOCKER. March, 1850.
We cannot do much more than catalogue the prodigious "periodical" influx of modern literature. The Knickerbocker, we have reason to believe, is deservedly a favorite with those who read it; and though somewhat discouraged by a certain laborious burlesque on some of the recent numbers, yet the very tempting aspect of the Literary Notes and Editor's Table, especially, in the present number, induces us to commend it with a good grace to all who desire a stout and pleasantly varied monthly miscellany.

CHRISTIAN PARLOR MAGAZINE. February, 1850.
We have reason to think that the promise of the prospectus is faithfully fulfilled, with only the qualification which every prospectus, we suppose, requires. The pages very fair; the embellishments quite indifferent; the articles good in quality, but too short and hurried for very high merit; the subjects fresh, various, and attractive. The subscription price is two dollars, besides which is offered to each subscriber a two dollar engraving—a premium dangerous, we fear, to the quality of the Magazine. For the aim and spirit, and, the whole, for the style of execution, we cordially recommend it.

MODERN LITERATURE AND LITERARY MEN. By G. G. J. Allan. Published by Appleton, New York. For sale at Farnham's.

Mr. Gilliland's essays, appearing first, we believe, in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, make here a very neat 12mo volume of 376 pages. The turmoil and effort of his style bring out occasionally some excellent points of criticism. Somehow, one cannot help thinking, in reading him, that (like the Emerson who aimed at the sun) his sight is fixed on Emerson and Carlyle, and he is straining to say good things about them and others as they have said for themselves. These five-and-twenty numbers, including Milton, Crabbe, Foster, Macaulay, Byron, Colburn, and Montgomery, are a sufficient pledge that something worth the pains to be found here. We intend to read the volume through, and cheerfully advise all who can to go and do likewise.

KONSTOS'S FORTUNE TELLING.
This, we are assured on the title-page, is in "Konstos's perfect Alphabet." Partly from a pleasant reminiscence of Greek in this alphabet, we have cherished a preference to it over the phrenetic characters. As to the "telling reform," we profess no faith in it—at least as to the purpose it aims at, though for training in vocal analysis, and, perhaps, (which some claim for it) as a facility in learning to read English, it has its uses. Its various attempts, we think, will remain as literary curiosities only. Its advocates seem to overlook three things; first, that for ordinary use, people who read must learn the common character at any rate for a century or two, or till all literature of value, didactic, or, to be translated, so that they can remember themselves with two alphabets instead of one; second, the force of association with the actual appearance of familiar words, so that no one who has read Spenser, for example, would be willing to see his stanzas even in our common orthography; and third, the fact that their proposed system is not the written *English tongue*, (which is fixed by rules, at least as definite as the spoken), but a device of modern ingenuity. Thus, understanding the difficulty, they prodigiously exaggerate the need and importance of their reform, by assuming an amount of difficulty in the ordinary process of learning to read and spell, which is completely disproved by the fact that well-trained children of five or six do so both fluently. It is our private opinion, also, that at least as many persons have the accomplishment of reading and spelling, as of pronouncing well. Some of the pronunciations given here are gross affronts to our sense of hearing, and we decided, to prefer the ordinary non-committal spelling.

To those, especially the aged, who prefer a phonetic or analytic type, we commend this handsome, large-print octavo Testament. We prefer it, on the whole, to the ungainly type of Pitman and the "Anglo-Saxonus."

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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM WYLLIE. By John P. Kennedy. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard. 1850. 12mo. At Farnham's.

Critically speaking, we do not like the eulogistic style and present tense that prevail in the narrative part of these volumes. We should also judge, from extracts that we have seen, that some portions, particularly of the private correspondence, were rather overdone, by publishing in the case of Leggett's trivialities that he better be forgotten—that make the volumes dearer to buy and harder to read. But this is a very small matter, compared with the great and substantial interest of such a biography. If it were only for the side-light which it throws on the two great events of our political history—the time of Burr's conspiracy and the first years of Jackson's rule, it would be of great value. That it has appeared already in a second edition, popularized and stereotyped, is a proof that it needs no further commendations from us.

GEORGE J. FARRINGTON, No. 2 Milk Street, Boston, advertises in our columns their new stock of shawls, silk goods, &c., for sale. It is hardly worth notice to observe, that Messrs. J. & P. import superior goods in their line, and cater for the wants of wholesale and retail purchasers on the most reasonable terms.

MR. CALHOUN AND THE NEW YORK UNION MEETING.
Mr. Calhoun spurns the peace offering of the Cass and Dickinson Democracy in New York. Hear him:

"The Senator calls my attention to a meeting of the section (the South) were they expressed that were favorable to the South. It is true there were many sentiments expressed there that I approve of, but I am not to be deceived by them; that meeting was for depriving us of all our rights in California and the Territories, and to the name by which they are called. Sir, I should be most happy to think that we should have the vote of the Senators from New York and of other Senators of the North in favor of preserving our rights in California. But the presence of both parties in the South were by speaking and the other by acting—the two, the latter is the most effective."

THE SLAVERY EXCITEMENT IN THE SOUTH AND PARTY LEADERS.
Having laid before our readers the speech of Mr. Calhoun, it may be well to call attention to certain portions of it. We do not intend to reply to his main argument, but simply to comment upon a few statements made by the speaker.

Assuming that deep discontent pervades the mind of the South, he says that it is a great mistake to suppose that it originated with demagogues.
On the contrary, all the great political influences of the section (the South) were arrayed against excitement, and exerted to the utmost to keep that people quiet. The great mass of the People of the South was divided, as in other sections, into Whigs and Democrats. The leaders and preachers of both parties in the South were very solicitous to prevent excitement and restore quiet."

The history of the country from the election of John Quincy Adams down to this time refutes this statement of Mr. Calhoun. From 1825 to 1850, the Slavery Question has been used by demagogues in the South to subvert party purposes, and much of the "deep discontent" of the Southern people is chargeable on their sinister aims and artifices. The Democratic or Jackson party, during the term of John Quincy Adams, raised the alarm cry of danger to Southern Institutions, and talked ominously of a dissolution of the Union. When General Jackson came into power, their tune changed; and they began to sing praises to the Union. Mr. Calhoun and his special friends now become the alarmists.

We have before us a volume of Duff Green's *Political Register*, printed in Washington, in 1833, in which, from week to week, the Administration was denounced for promulgating principles fatal in its ultimate consequences to Slaveholding institutions. The proceedings of Northern Anti-Slavery societies are published at full length, with the most inflammatory comments, designed to arouse the prejudices of the South. Garbled quotations are made from Northern papers, especially those sustaining the Jackson Administration, and they are tortured into declarations of hostility to the South. The Proclamation of General Jackson in nullification times is denounced as involving principles, which, if carried out, would authorize interference in certain contingencies with Slavery in the States; and the constant aim of the paper is to convince the Slaveholders that the Northern majority harbors the purpose of passing an act of universal emancipation. Every art is practiced to inflame the minds of Slaveholders, to arouse sectional jealousy and discontent among them. Next to the *Emancipator* itself, then published at New York, we know of no paper that contains so full a record of the proceedings of abolition societies and lecturers in 1833, as the *Political Register* of Duff Green for that year. And in this policy he was sustained by all the politicians of the South who favored the claims of John C. Calhoun for the Presidency, and hated Martin Van Buren. They played a reckless game for power, and the agitation of Slavery was the trump card by which they always sought to win the game.

The same policy has been pursued ever since. The Slave States have been kept in perpetual turmoil and excitement by the cry of woe! woe! especially when the Democrats of the South have been out of power. During the Administration of Martin Van Buren, Congress was the scene of incessant strife growing out of the attempt of the Calhoun faction to institute extreme tests on the Slavery Question, and force *agony* upon the free people of the North. Under the Administrations of John Tyler and James K. Polk, although anti-Slavery operations at the North grew more vigorous, although gags were repealed, and petitions on Slavery received in Congress, although the Liberty party swelled its numbers from seven thousand voters to seventy thousand, excitement slept at the South—there were no cries of danger to Southern rights, no menaces of a Dissolution of the Union. But, the moment the power passed away from the hands of Southern Democrats, they joined forces with the Calhoun faction, and forthwith every Slave State was racked with agitation. The Washington *Union* becomes the central organ of the excitement, but, with a keen eye to party power, amidst its agonies for the impelled Union, it forgets not to admonish the South that Northern Democrats are comparatively sound on the Slavery Question, that Northern *Editors* are the true friends of the alliance of Northern Federalists with Southern Whigs to be ascribed the dangers that now threaten us; and then it strives to arouse the Slaveholders without distinction of party against the Whig Administration of General Taylor. Now, who doubts, were the Administration to change hands to-morrow, passing under the control of Mr. Buchanan for example, that the *Union* would set to work to prove to the South that it was laboring under unnecessary excitement, and that the most unwise

thing it could do, would be to hold a Southern Convention at Nashville!

We do not say that the deep discontent alleged to pervade the mind of the South does not arise in part from some of the causes indicated by Mr. Calhoun, but we do deny most emphatically, and the political history of the country for the last twenty-five years fully sustains the denial, that "the leaders and preachers of both parties in the South have been very solicitous to prevent excitement and restore quiet."

RECIPROCITY WITH GREAT BRITAIN.
A few days since, the Executive laid before the Senate a correspondence between the British Minister and the American Secretary of State concerning the commercial relations of the two countries. The Minister, in a letter dated January 1st, acknowledges with great pleasure the decree of the President conceding to British vessels, in American ports, the same privileges which are granted to American vessels in British ports. Assuming that the design of our standing regulations is to confer on the vessels of foreign Powers such advantages as may be conferred on American vessels by those Powers, he asks not that British vessels may be admitted to our coasting trade, but to the trade between the east and west coasts of the United States, which resembles in its character the trade carried on between the United Kingdom and the transmarine possessions of the British Crown, into which trade the new act authorizes the admission of the vessels of all countries which may be disposed to establish a fair reciprocity.

As American vessels, becoming British property, are now admissible to the advantages of a British register, he also asks that British vessels, becoming American property, may be admitted to the benefits of an American register. In a note, dated January 1st, he writes:
"It having been represented to her Majesty's Government that there is some idea on the part of the Government of the United States to increase the duties upon British iron imported into the United States, I have been instructed by her Majesty's Government to express to the United States Government the hope that her Majesty's Government that no addition will be made to the duties imposed by the present tariff of the United States, which already weigh heavily on British production, and I cannot but observe, for my own part, that an augmentation of the duties on British produce or manufactures, made at a moment when the British Government has, by a series of measures, been facilitating the commerce between the two countries, would be a very disagreeable effect on public opinion in England."

This correspondence, having been laid before the Senate, some discussion arose at the proper disposition of it, which was cut short by the motion to adjourn. The next day, Wednesday, 6th, the subject again came up, and Mr. Cooper of Pennsylvania took occasion to denounce the conduct of the British Minister as intermeddling, officious, impertinent, offensive. For such vituperation, he was properly rebuked by the leading Senators, who could not agree with him that the British Minister had violated any of the properties of his position.

The correspondence was at last referred to the Committee on Commerce.
The indignation of Mr. Cooper was entirely uncalculated. The British Government, under the pressure of a healthy public opinion, is now engaged in the work of removing restrictions upon her commerce, and the more liberal her policy, the better for this country. Mr. Bulwer, understanding that it is in contemplation to raise the duties in this country on certain articles of British production, apprises our Government of the liberal commercial policy of Great Britain, and takes the liberty of suggesting that an antagonistic policy on our part may affect very unfavorably public opinion in Britain, and thereby restrain the efforts of the Government to remove restrictions from her commerce. This is fair and honorable. Countries trading together so largely as England and the United States, should understand the policy of each other's Government, and have a reasonable reference to the public opinion in each country.

CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS.
The Boston *Traveler* copies from the *Atlas* the complete returns from the several towns, which show the following result:
March 14, 1850—Palfrey, 4,318; Robinson, 2,266; Thompson, 4,624.

John C. Calhoun, 1850—Palfrey, 3,927; Robinson, 1,902; Thompson, 4,624.

And then adds:
"This result shows an increase of 831 votes over the number given at the trial in January. This increase is divided among the candidates, as follows: Palfrey 391, Robinson 364, and Thompson 96. Mr. Thompson now leads Mr. Palfrey 36 votes. At the last trial he led him 601. Thompson's loss, in that respect, 305. The majority against Mr. Thompson at the last trial was 320. Now it is 364. The scattered votes, 2,930—making his loss 729."

TWO WEEKS LATER FROM CALIFORNIA.
The U. S. mail steamer *Georgia*, Captain Porter, arrived here at about half-past ten o'clock last evening, bringing by mail from San Francisco to New York, the following letters left there on the 15th of January.

The *Georgia* brings 250 passengers from Chagres, besides 50 left at Havana for the *Falcon*, in all 309, with about \$600,000 of gold dust.

Passengers brought, in addition to the above amount, some \$350,000, in dust not on the manifest. The steamer *California* which sailed 15th January, brought 200 passengers, and is expected to arrive here on the 15th of February. The reason for the small amounts shipped is, there not having been any intercourse with the mines for several weeks, in consequence of the great height of rivers.

Correspondence of the New York Tribune.
The recent overflow of the Sacramento river, by which the various cities and towns on its borders have been wholly or partially submerged, has been the topic of much correspondence. The rain season has been unusually severe, and the vast quantities of rain and snow which have fallen on the slopes of the Sierra Nevada, has kept the streams brimful and running over for weeks. It is the opinion of the "oldest inhabitant" that spring will come in the course of a few months, and this appears to be sustained by the almanac. It is, to say the least, a very extraordinary coincidence, that the same unhappy city which has been compelled for months to navigate the unfathomable depths of mud which pervade our unpaved streets. Did you ever go over the road that leads through the *Sierra Nevada*, as it is called, but is in fact the "oldest inhabitant" that spring will come in the course of a few months, and this appears to be sustained by the almanac. 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